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USSR

Ref. No.: 3/NBF/T1995

Issued : 29/2/1972<sup>25X1</sup>25X1

Copy No.: 301

INVESTIGATION OF THE RIFs' VISA APPLICATION  
(1945)

From: NEW YORK

To: MOSCOW

Nos.: 63-66

15th January 1945

[4-part message complete]

[Part I] To VIKTOR[i].

As a result of the investigation of the RIFs'[ii] case by the  
lawyer, the following has emerged:

MARCUS[MARKUS][iii]

[10 groups unrecovered]

the BANK[iv]

[48 groups unrecoverable]

[Continued overleaf]

3/NBF/T1995

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~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

95

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**~~TOP SECRET~~**

25X1

25X1

- 2 -

3/NBF/T1995

..OLIM[v], who informed him in confidence that the KhATA[vi] had held up the visa, as it was not clear how RIF had acquired Swiss citizenship in 1942 and had not previously been called up for the Red Army. Moreover there is no document showing how BAS[vii] got to know about RIF's change to this citizenship. According to the lawyer, at least a letter from the RIFs or from BAS's sister, explaining how BAS became aware of this fact, should have been attached to the application form[ANKETA] to the BANK. The KhATA also wishes to know where and in which establishment the RIFs are teaching (they are described as teachers). In conversation with BAS, the lawyer said that the KhATA keeps a very close watch on the movement of foreigners in the COUNTRYSIDE[DEREVNYA][viii], as it considers the COUNTRYSIDE to be one of the focal points for our intelligence organisations. The KhATA is interested in what the RIFs will do in the COUNTRYSIDE (in connection with this we learnt for the first time from BAS that [D% in no document] is it stated that the RIFs have been to their own country). The lawyer warns that the Commission will ask whether the RIFs have been out of the USSR and whether RIF's wife is Jewish. The lawyer asked BAS how he knew that the RIFs were legally married. BAS answered

[15 groups unrecovered]

[B% .] With a view to delaying matters, the Commission [C% may demand] [1 group unrecovered] [C% corresponding to the documents.] [3 groups unrecovered] [B% :] the RIFs' case has attracted the attention of the KhATA and the fact that the arrangements for the journey have not been worked out in sufficient detail is arousing suspicion. The only explanation which BAS can give as to how he got to know that the RIFs were naturalised in 1942 is to say what he was told in the letter from his sister: but he has not kept this letter. This is a weak argument and, even if it is acceptable to the KhATA, they will devote more attention to the formalities in connection with the RIFs. As regards the following questions (1. In what academic institution are the R.[ix] working? 2. Have they been abroad? 3. Their marriage certificate) BAS can, if you agree, send enquiries to the R. in a plain text telegram and attach the answer he receives to the application form.

[Part IV] [2 groups unrecovered] MARCUS

[14 groups unrecovered].

We agree with this and add that

[37 groups unrecovered].

One must not give up trying to obtain a visa, as

[26 groups unrecovered]

3/NBF/T1995

**VENONA**  
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25X1

95

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~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

25X1

- 3 -

3/NBF/T1995

illegal channels. Telegraph immediately stating whether BAS should send enquiries by telegraph to the RIFs on the [1 group unrecovered] three questions.

No. 41  
15th January

MAJ[x]

Comments: [i] VIKTOR: Lt.-Gen. P.M. FITIN.  
[ii] RIF(s): i.e. "(The) REEF(s)"; Nicholas FISHER and his wife Maria.  
[iii] MARCUS: Possibly Ralph MARCUS.  
[iv] BANK: U.S. State Department.  
[v] ..OLINS: Unidentified.  
[vi] KhATA: Federal Bureau of Investigation.  
[vii] BAS: i.e. "BASS"; Michael W. BURD.  
[viii] COUNTRYSIDE: MEXICO.  
[ix] R.: i.e. RIFs: see Comment [ii].  
[x] MAJ: i.e. "MAY"; Stepan Zakharovich APRESYan, Soviet Vice-Consul in NEW YORK.

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